



SCHOOL FINANCE UPDATE

A Monthly Newsletter Published by the School Finance Division

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This newsletter is emailed to school districts, county superintendents, county treasurers, and auditors each month. The newsletter is intended to reach all district staff involved in budgeting, accounting, enrollment, special education funding, and federal programs. Please forward it to all interested parties. Got suggestions for items to include here? We'd love to hear from you!

FY2009-10 2nd Semester Bus Inspections

Pre-filled bus inspection forms (TR-13) for the second semester may be printed from the transportation system. Buses must pass inspection for the second semester by January 31, 2010 in order to be eligible for full funding for the second semester. Please schedule inspections early to allow time for re-inspection by January 31, if necessary.

OPI Contact: Maxine Mougeot, (406) 444-3096 or mmougeot@mt.gov

Improving Air Quality by Reducing Diesel Emissions

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) initiated Clean Air Zone Montana to provide Montana school districts with a comprehensive toolkit to reduce the impacts of vehicle emissions outside their schools.

According to the DEQ's website at <http://www.deq.state.mt.us/Recycle/CleanAirZone.asp>, the goals of Clean Air Zone Montana are to: 1) provide a healthier environment for Montana's school children by reducing emissions from diesel-powered school buses, and 2) improve air quality in and around school buildings and throughout local communities. The website has information about the health impacts of diesel exhaust and describes ways schools can minimize it, such as reducing or eliminating idling of buses and other vehicles, parking away from children's gathering places and using alternative fuels.

The program was featured in an article in the September 24 issue of School Transportation News (see this link: <http://www.stnonline.com/resources/clean-school-bus/related-clean-school-bus-articles/768-montana-targets-idling-at-schools>).

OPI Contact: Maxine Mougeot, (406) 444-3096 or mmougeot@mt.gov

Coming Soon - 2nd Quarter ARRA Report

The 2nd quarter ARRA report is due December 31, 2009. Updates to the report program will be completed and there will be an OPI webinar on Tuesday, December 8, 2009. In the meantime, check out the ARRA resources posted on the OPI website at: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/schoolfinance/ARRA.html>

OPI Contact: Adam Anfinson, (406) 444-4524 or aanfinson@mt.gov

2010 Election Calendar

The 2010 School Election Calendar is posted on the OPI website at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/SchoolFinance/Forms/10ElectionCalendar.pdf> and the Election Handbook is posted at: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/schoolfinance/ElecHB.html>

OPI Contact: Adam Anfinson, (406) 444-4524 or aanfinson@mt.gov

Please Review Quality Educator (QE) Report

Please review your district's staff assignments that will be used for the FY2010-11 Quality Educator payment. A report is available on the OPI website for each school district and special education cooperative to review its personnel assignments at <http://data.opi.mt.gov/QualityEdFte/Default.aspx>.

We ask that you pay special attention to the last section of the report where the assignments that are not included in the Quality Educator payment are listed. An assignment is ineligible for the Quality Educator payment either because it does not require a license or the employee did not hold a valid educator or professional license as of December 1, 2009.

Any corrections to your district information must be reported to the OPI in writing (mail or email) by **Friday, January 15, 2010**. If approved, these changes will be reflected on the FY2010-11 general fund preliminary budget data sheets that OPI will post to the website by March 1, 2010. Send your corrections with a brief explanation to Colleen Hamer in the OPI Accreditation Division as soon as possible, but not later than January 15, 2010.

OPI Contact: Colleen Hamer, (406) 444-2410 or chamer@mt.gov.

Montana Quality Schools Grant Program

The Montana Department of Commerce has posted information about the Montana Quality Schools Grant Program on their website at <http://commerce.mt.gov/Qualityschools/>. This competitive grant program was created by House Bill 152 in the 2009 legislative session for (1) school facility and technology grants; (2) matching planning grants; and (3) emergency grants for public school districts in Montana.

Contact: Chad Hultin, Montana Department of Commerce, (406) 841-2875 or chultin@mt.gov.

Summary of Verification Form Due December 15, 2009

The Summary of Verification of free and reduced-price school meal applications is due to the OPI School Nutrition Programs by December 15, 2009. The form is located on the OPI website at http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/SchoolFood/Forms/Verify/09_10VerificationSummary.pdf.

OPI Contact: Teresa Motlas, (406) 444-2501 or tmotlas@mt.gov.

Useful Links

State Entitlement Payments to Schools:
<http://www.opi.mt.gov/PUB/School%20Finance/Payments/>

School Accounting: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/SchoolFinance/Acct.html>

Forms and Publications: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/SchoolFinance/Forms.html>

Pupil Transportation: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/PupilTransport/index.html>

Enrollment and ANB: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/SchoolFinance/Enrollment.html>

Tuition: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/SchoolFinance/Forms.html>

Audit Information: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/SchoolFinance/Audit.html>

School Finance Calendar: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/calendar/calendar.php?calendar=2>

Summary of OPI Activities: <http://opi.mt.gov/OPISummary/>

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**Happy New
Year!**

